UNITED
NATIONS

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Security Council

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S/1997/287
8 April 1997

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

LETTER DATED 7 APRIL 1997 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF UGANDA TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

On instructions from my Government, I have the honour to transmit to you a statement issued at the end of the Quadrilateral talks between the Foreign Ministers of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Uganda and Malawi and the First Under-Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Sudan, held at Entebbe, Uganda, from 13 to 15 March 1997.

I shall be grateful if you will have the text of the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Professor SEMAKULA KIWANUKA
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

97-09292 (E) 080497

/...

Annex

Statement issued at the end of the Quadrilateral Talks between the Foreign Ministers of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Uganda and Malawi and the First Under-Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Sudan, held at Entebbe, Uganda from 13 to 15 March 1997

In pursuance of the efforts made to bring about peace and stability between the Republic of Uganda and the Republic of the Sudan, Uganda's First Deputy Prime Minister/Minister for Foreign Affairs, the Hon. Eriya Kategaya, hosted the meeting of Foreign Ministers of the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Hon. Ali Akabar Velayati, the Hon. A. G. Nga Mtafu of the Republic of Malawi and Mr. Ali Animeri, the First Under-Secretary in the Sudanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The meeting, chaired by Mr. Velayati, reviewed and reassessed the situation regarding the normalization of relations between the Sudan and Uganda since the last meeting held at Tehran from 3-4 November 1996 and focused, inter alia, on the establishment of the verification team as contained in the Khartoum Agreement of 9 September 1996 (S/1996/740). It was regrettable that this particular meeting ended without any agreement as concerns were expressed by Uganda on the failure to implement the provisions of the Khartoum Agreement since it was signed. Uganda believes that more positive practical steps need to be taken by the Sudan for the full implementation of the Agreement.

Uganda has always subscribed to good-neighbourliness and in this regard has spared no efforts in advancing this course with its neighbour, the Sudan, as demonstrated by its participation in all mediation efforts held in the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, South Africa, Austria and recently in Rome at the highest level; and at the ministerial level in Tripoli, Malawi, Khartoum, Tehran, and now at Entebbe.

The Entebbe talks were the latest in a series of initiatives on relations between Uganda and the Sudan taken by various countries. At the highest level, talks have been held in the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Malawi, South Africa, Austria and recently in Rome and at the ministerial level in Tripoli, Khartoum, New York and Tehran.

In Khartoum, under the mediation of the Islamic Republic of Iran, an Agreement on the settlement of disputes and the normalization of relations between the Republic of Uganda and the Republic of Sudan was signed in September 1996. The major areas covered in the Agreement were the following:

(i) To cease immediately all campaigns of official negative propaganda against each other, bilaterally or at any other forum;

(ii) To cease to provide territory to be used by belligerent forces against each other's country;

(iii) To refrain from providing support directly or indirectly to belligerent forces opposed to each other's Government;

(iv) To disarm and dismantle bases and logistics centres of belligerent groups of either of the two countries in the territory of the other;

(v) To move all belligerent groups of either of the two countries away from the common border to a distance not less than one hundred kilometres from the common borders;

(vi) That each country should enhance and facilitate the voluntary return of refugees;

(vii) To set up a verification team comprising representatives of the two sides, the Islamic Republic of Iran and if, they accepted, Malawi and the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya.

Soon after the Khartoum Agreement had been signed, the Sudan carried out attacks and bombing on Uganda territory as follows:

(i) On 10 October 1996, rebels of the Lords Resistance Army (LRA) who had crossed from their bases in the Sudan attacked St. Mary's Aboke in Apac and abducted 149 students. To date, 24 girls still remain in captivity, as mentioned earlier;

(ii) On 12 October 1996 rebels of the West Nile Bank Front (WNBF) estimated at about 120 and commanded by "Captain" Morosprang from their base in Kaya in the Sudan, moved through Zaire and entered Uganda through Simbiri on the north-eastern border of Zaire with Uganda. Later, the rebels attacked the Uganda People's Defence Forces (UPDF) position at Maracha. The group was badly beaten and retreated back into Zaire;

(iii) On 25 October 1996, WNBF rebels planted a mine on the Koboko-Arua road which hit the lorry of a non-governmental organization (NGO) at Nyori. They also sprang from their bases in Kaya, crossed into Uganda and attacked the Lefuli refugee camp and set ablaze all the houses in the trading centre;

(iv) On 31 October 1996, WNBF rebels attempted to blow up the Inve bridge on the Arua-Koboko road but the attempt was foiled by UPDF;

(v) On 8 November 1996, a lorry with registration No. UPX 057 was hit by a landmine planted by WNBF at the Okoro trading centre;

(vi) On 9 November 1996, an estimated 250 LRA rebels crossed from Arua in the Sudan led by "Brigadier" Omona into Uganda. The group had a lot of ammunition. Omona fled back to the Sudan on 26 January 1997;

(vii) On 24 January 1997, WNBF rebels estimated at about 300, with the backing of the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF), sprang from their base at Yondi near Kaya in the Sudan and attacked Medigo Parish in Aringa County, Arua District. Between 31 January and 3 February 1997,

splinter groups attacked and looted Lodongo Catholic Mission in separate raids.

Since October 1996, SAF fighter planes have violated Uganda's airspace nine times. During this period SAF fighters bombed Moyo. An Iranian military investigation team led by the Deputy Foreign Minister of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Hussein Sheikhul Islam, visited the site and a report is still awaited. The most recent violation was 13 February 1997, when two SAF fighter planes, one MIG and an Antanov, violated Uganda's airspace in Moyo. They dropped eight bombs near the UPDF barracks but missed their target. Five of them exploded. Two civilians were injured and one died in the attack.

On the same day, SAF aircraft, an Antanov, violated Uganda's airspace in Arua District. It dropped three 200 kg bombs at Atolo village in Oluvu Division, Maracha Country, Arua District, on the Uganda-Zaire border. The attack left behind a deep crater. Four civilians were seriously wounded.

Subsequent to the Khartoum Agreement, a Ministerial Meeting was held at Tehran on 3 and 4 November 1996, ostensibly aimed at having the Agreement on establishment of a verification team signed by the Foreign Ministers. In Tehran, the Uganda delegation, which was again led by the First Deputy Prime Minister/Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr. Eriya Kategaya, made it clear that even after the signing of the Khartoum Agreement that there had not been any public gesture to show that the Sudan was serious about implementing the provisions of the Khartoum Agreement. Until this was done, Uganda could not sign the Verification Team Agreement.

As far as Uganda is concerned, still at issue is the question of the Sudan's sincerity and commitment to normalize relations and the need to evince the acts demonstrating this sincerity and commitment, especially by meeting the three conditions in the first instance. What is very clear is that the Sudan is eager to have the Verification Team Agreement signed because it would give them a foothold in Uganda. The Islamic Republic of Iran, for its part, is also keen for the Verification Team Agreement to be signed as this would appear to have resulted from its efforts to normalize relations between the Sudan and Uganda.

However, let it be known to both the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Sudan that the signing of the Verification Team Agreement will not end the war in the Sudan. The Sudanese Government believes that it can intimidate Uganda out of sympathizing (but not supporting) with the cause of southern Sudan by unleashing Kony criminals on an innocent civilian population in northern Uganda. Such a policy will only succeed in killing some people and damaging the economy but will not stop the people of southern Sudan from regaining their full and equal rights.

Sudan must display visible commitments in the Khartoum Agreement and make sincere efforts towards the normalization of our relations. To date no such commitment or sincerity has been demonstrated; instead the Sudan has downgraded its level of representation at the Entebbe meeting and refused to allow the mention in the communiqué of the abduction of girls whose parents and headmistress testified before the Foreign Ministers of the Islamic Republic of Iran and Malawi and the First Under-Secretary of Sudan when they met the

President. Uganda still believes that the conflict has to be solved, and is open to further talks whenever the Sudan is ready and can show seriousness and commitment towards resolution of the problem.

The Sudan's lack of commitment to the resolution of the problem was once again demonstrated by the fact that while these talks were taking place, the Permanent Representative of Sudan to the United Nations on 13 March 1997 addressed a letter to the President of the Security Council (S/1997/223) in which he made calumnious and baseless allegations against Uganda.

The delegation later met President Museveni, who reaffirmed Uganda's commitment to its policy of good-neighbourliness but expressed concern over the continued violation by the Sudan of the provisions of the Khartoum Agreement of 9 September 1996.

Prior to the address of President Museveni, the Foreign Ministers of the Islamic Republic of Iran and Malawi and the First Under-Secretary of the Sudan listened to the testimonies of the parents and the headmistress of the 24 girls from St. Mary's Aboke in Apac who are still held captive in Aruu in the Sudan and sought their intervention to ensure their release and safe return. This is in addition to an appeal already published by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) regarding the abductions in camps in the Sudan, based on testimonies from 15 children who escaped from the abductors.

UNITED
NATIONS

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8 April 1997

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GENERAL ASSEMBLY
Fifty-first session
Agenda item 58
QUESTION OF CYPRUS

SECURITY COUNCIL
Fifty-second year

Letter dated 26 March 1997 from the Permanent Representative of Cyprus to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Upon instructions from my Government, I have the honour to draw your attention to new violations of the airspace of the Republic of Cyprus and of the flight information region (FIR) of Nicosia by military aircraft of the Turkish Air Force, recorded on 20 March 1997.

On 20 March 1997, at 0900 hours and 1114 hours, two Turkish military planes, a C-130 and a C-160, flew over the monastery of Ayios Andreas, violating the national airspace of the Republic of Cyprus and the Nicosia flight information region, and then exited from Solin Point heading in a south-easterly direction. At 1240 and 1435 hours, the two military aircraft re-entered the FIR of Nicosia from Solin Point and violated the airspace of the Republic, flying over the monastery of Ayios Andreas, and headed in a northerly direction.

Furthermore, on 19 March 1997, a Turkish military aircraft from 1242 to 1330 hours, and two F-16s from 1810 to 1857 hours, both taking part in the Turkish military exercises of Dogú Akdeniz/97, violated the FIR of Nicosia.

Such unauthorized intrusions into the Nicosia flight information region and the airspace of the Republic are in violation of international air traffic rules and seriously endanger civil aviation flights over Cyprus. At the same time, they heighten tension in Cyprus and are in contravention of the provisions of repeated Security Council resolutions on Cyprus, which state that such overflights increase political tension on the island and undermine efforts towards achieving a final settlement.

On behalf of the Government of the Republic of Cyprus, I wish to strongly protest against the new violations of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Republic of Cyprus, which are in complete disregard of the Charter of the

United Nations and the relevant decisions of the Organization on the question of Cyprus.

I should be grateful if you would have the text of the present letter circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 58, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Nicos AGATHOCLEOUS
Ambassador, Permanent Representative
of the Republic of Cyprus
to the United Nations

UNITED
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General Assembly
Security Council

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GENERAL

A/51/866
S/1997/289
8 April 1997

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

GENERAL ASSEMBLY
Fifty-first session
Agenda items 33, 35 and 85
THE SITUATION IN THE MIDDLE EAST
QUESTION OF PALESTINE
REPORT OF THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE TO INVESTIGATE ISRAELI PRACTICES AFFECTING THE HUMAN RIGHTS OF THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE AND OTHER ARABS OF THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES

SECURITY COUNCIL
Fifty-second year

Identical letters dated 8 April 1997 from the Permanent Observer of Palestine to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and to the President of the Security Council

Today, 8 April 1997, a colonial Jewish settler shot dead a Palestinian civilian, 24-year-old Asem Arafeh, in the city of Al-Khalil (Hebron) without any provocation. The Israeli occupying soldiers, using so-called "rubber bullets", also shot and killed two other Palestinian civilians, and an estimated 100 Palestinians were injured throughout the West Bank today. Yesterday, 7 April 1997, another colonial settler shot two Palestinians in the village of Kharbata, near Ramallah. One of the wounded remains in serious condition. These perilous developments, particularly the terrorist acts committed by the colonials settlers, represent a new phase in both Israel's escalation of oppressive measures and its hostile political attitude.

It is worth mentioning in this regard that the Prime Minister of Israel, Mr. Benjamin Netanyahu, on 3 April 1997, alluded to possible new "Baruch Goldsteins". Goldstein was the terrorist who killed more than 30 Palestinian worshippers in Al-Haram Al-Ibrahimi in Hebron on 25 February 1994. Other colonial settlers have actually established a monument on the tomb of Goldstein in his honour. On its part, Israel, the occupying Power, has never implemented Security Council resolution 904 (1994), which was adopted in the wake of the massacre.

Exacerbating the already extremely dangerous situation, the Prime Minister, at a press conference in Washington, D.C., on 7 April 1997, released a barrage of wild statements, reiterating the Israeli intention to proceed with a new illegal settlement in Jabal Abu Ghneim to the south of Occupied East Jerusalem. Moreover, the Prime Minister asserted that Jerusalem is an "Israeli city", in full defiance of international law and relevant Security Council resolutions, as well as in contempt of every State Member of the United Nations, none of which has recognized Israel's proclaimed sovereignty over Occupied East Jerusalem. Such statements also make a mockery of the agreements reached between the parties to negotiate the future of Jerusalem. Furthermore, when the Prime Minister states that the occupied territory is "our land", he is on the verge of negating the mutual recognition between the Palestinian and Israeli sides and the crux of the whole peace process.

The serious deterioration of the situation on the ground and the increasing threats to the Middle East peace process resulting from illegal and detrimental Israeli actions and policies reaffirm the need for the speedy convening of the emergency special session of the General Assembly, which has been requested by the Arab Group, to take the necessary actions, including the appropriate collective measures by Member States.

I would be grateful if you would arrange to have the text of the present letter distributed as an official document of the General Assembly, under agenda items 33, 35 and 85, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Dr. Nasser AL-KIDWA
Permanent Observer of Palestine
to the United Nations

UNITED NATIONS **S**

Security Council

Distr.
GENERAL

S/1997/290
9 April 1997
ENGLISH
ORIGINAL: ENGLISH, FRENCH AND RUSSIAN

Draft resolution

The Security Council,

Recalling its resolution 1082 (1996) of 27 November 1996,

Reaffirming its commitment to the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia,

Having considered the letter of 3 April 1997, and the recommendation contained therein, from the Secretary-General to the President of the Security Council (S/1997/276),

1. Decides to suspend the reduction of the military component of the United Nations Preventive Deployment Force (UNPREDEP) referred to in its resolution 1082 (1996) until the end of the current mandate on 31 May 1997;

2. Welcomes the redeployment of UNPREDEP already achieved in the light of the situation in Albania, and encourages the Secretary-General to continue further redeployment of UNPREDEP taking into consideration the situation in the region, consistent with the mandate of UNPREDEP;

3. Requests the Secretary-General to submit to the Council by 15 May 1997 his report with recommendations on a subsequent international presence in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, as referred to in its resolution 1082 (1996);

4. Decides to remain seized of the matter.

97-09517 (E) 090497

UNITED NATIONS **S**

Security Council

Distr.
GENERAL

S/1997/291
8 April 1997

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

LETTER DATED 4 APRIL 1997 FROM THE SECRETARY-GENERAL ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

I have the honour to refer to the command of the United Nations Observer Mission in Georgia (UNOMIG).

The Chief Military Observer of UNOMIG, Major-General Per Källström, will complete his assignment on 30 April 1997 and will return to the service of his Government.

Following the usual consultations, it is my intention to appoint Major-General Harun-Ar-Rashid of Bangladesh to succeed Major-General Källström. Major-General Harun-Ar-Rashid is expected to take up his functions on 1 May 1997.

I should be grateful if you would bring this matter to the attention of the members of the Security Council.

(Signed) Kofi A. ANNAN

97-09326 (E) 080497

UNITED
NATIONS

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Security Council

Distr.
GENERAL

S/1997/292
8 April 1997

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

LETTER DATED 8 APRIL 1997 FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

I have the honour to inform you that your letter dated 4 April 1997 (S/1997/291) concerning the command of the United Nations Observer Mission in Georgia (UNOMIG) and your intention to appoint Major-General Harun-Ar-Rashid of Bangladesh to succeed Major-General Källström as Chief Military Observer of UNOMIG has been brought to the attention of the members of the Security Council. They agree with the intention contained in the letter.

(Signed) António MONTEIRO
President of the Security Council

97-09332 (E) 080497

UNITED NATIONS **S**

Security Council

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GENERAL

S/1997/293
9 April 1997
ENGLISH
ORIGINAL: FRENCH

LETTER DATED 9 APRIL 1997 FROM THE CHARGE D'AFFAIRES A.I. OF THE PERMANENT MISSION OF ZAIRE TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

I have the honour to transmit herewith, for the information of the members of the Security Council, the communiqué issued on the conclusion of the general discussions on the situation in Zaire which took place in Pretoria, South Africa, between the two Zairian delegations.

I should be grateful if you would have this letter and its annex circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) KHABOUJI N'ZAJI LUKABU
Minister Plenipotentiary
Deputy Permanent Representative
Chargé d'affaires a.i.

97-09552 (E) 090497 090497

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Annex

[Original: English and French]

COMMUNIQUE

In the general discussions which took place from 5 to 8 April 1997, and during which the two Zairian delegations, namely the delegation of the Government of Zaire and that of the Alliance of Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Congo-Zaire (ADFL), made their presentations on the situation in their country, the following points of convergence emerged:

1. Though the parties had different views on the nature and origin of the crisis in Zaire, they agreed on the fact that there were serious issues of political structures and governance which must be addressed as a matter of urgency.

2. Both parties agreed on negotiations to bring about a peaceful, political solution to the conflict. This necessitates a complete cessation of hostilities and other measures consistent with the implementation of the UN/OAU Peace Plan.

3. Both parties expressed their commitment to the principles of territorial integrity, inviolability of borders and the unity and sovereignty of Zaire within recognized international borders. They agreed that this was not an issue between them as they both shared this commitment.

4. The parties underlined the need for fundamental and democratic change in Zaire. In this regard, they concurred on the need for a process of transition leading to transparent, fair and inclusive elections which would be organized and supervised by an independent body and monitored by the international community.

5. The parties considered that peace and stability, both in Zaire and in other countries in the region, were crucial for peace in the region as a whole. Therefore, it was important to examine ways and means of promoting good relations between States in the region.

DONE AT PRETORIA ON 8 APRIL 1997

For the delegation of the Government of Zaire duly mentioned by the Head of State

Mr. Gerard Kamanda wa Kamanda
Deputy Prime Minister and
Minister of Foreign Affairs

For the delegation of the Alliance of Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Congo-Zaire (ADFL)

Dr. Bizima Karaha
General Commissioner for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation duly mandated by the President of ADFL
L. D. Kabila

UNITED
NATIONS

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Security Council

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GENERAL

S/1997/294
9 April 1997

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

LETTER DATED 9 APRIL 1997 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF CROATIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

Upon the instructions of my Government I have the honour to transmit to you herewith statement No. 3 from the Government of Croatia on the documents programme in the Croatian Danube region and on the status of Serbs and other minorities in Croatia.

The statement provides the latest data on the documents programme, which has produced exceptional results. Over the past several months, slightly less than 120,000 residents of the region have received one or more documents that they could use, inter alia, in respect of the elections on Sunday, 13 April. The total number of residents who received documents exceeds most estimates of the present population in the region.

Up to this point, the international community and the Government of Croatia have dedicated outstanding good will and substantial resources in assisting the Serbs in the region to realize the rights enjoyed throughout the war by tens of thousands of Serb citizens of Croatia who did not raise arms against the Government and by all other citizens. The Government hopes that these efforts will not be in vain, and that the Serbs formerly affiliated with the rebel and occupying forces will reject their past policy of ethnic exclusivity and accept living once again with non-Serbs as citizens of Croatia.

From now on, the international community and the Government of Croatia will need to find ways to balance properly the efforts on behalf of the Serbs in the region with the efforts on behalf of 96,000 mostly non-Serb displaced persons and refugees who have been waiting for almost five years to return to their homes in the region. It will be a delicate process of reconciliation between, on one hand, the party formerly affiliated with the aggressor and, on the other, the party that was victimized by the aggressor. The Government of Croatia will look to cooperate with the international community in finding a proper way to harmonize the complex matrix of sometime conflicting interests of the two groups, while focusing its efforts on protecting civil liberties, human and minority rights, as well as maintaining internal security and regional peace and stability.

May I ask for your kind assistance in distributing the present letter and its annex as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Ivan SIMONOVIC
Permanent Representative

Annex

Statement No. 3 on the documents programme in the Danube region and on the status of Serbs and other minorities in Croatia, 9 April 1997

The Government has issued 348,000 documents to the residents of the Danube region of Croatia, out of 355,446 applications. Only 275 applications have been denied; 7,171 are still in process. The breakdown of document requests, their type and status as of 6 April is as follows:

Documents status	Applications received	Documents issued	Applications denied	Applications in process
Domovnicas[a]	121 202	119 112	0	2 090
Naturalization documents	30 877	30 426	275	176
Identification cards	93 982	60 971 domiciled 32 875 settlers 93 846	0	136
Passports	81 887	81 707	0	180
Birth certificates and other documents	27 498	22 909	0	4 589
Total	355 446	348 000	275	7 171
Percentage of total	100.0	97.9	0.1	2.0

[a] Citizenship certificates.

Slightly less than 120,000 domovnicas that are needed for voter registration have been issued so far. About two thirds have been issued to the pre-war residents of the region, and about on third to persons who moved into the region since 1991. In cases where applicants did not appear on local citizenship registers, or in instances where local registers were missing owing to warfare or theft, the applicants were required to apply for naturalization; 30,426 persons became naturalized citizens. The total number of issued domovnicas compares favourably with estimates of the present population in the region that range from 108,000 to 150,000.

The majority of Serbs, however, are not using their documents to register to vote. Owing to a low registration turnout on the Serb side, the Transitional Administrator had extended the voter registration deadline in the region three times; first from 24 March to 28 March, then to 5 April, and then one more time for special cases to 11 April.

The documents programme has been extremely successful. This is due in part to the tremendous resources the Government has committed to the task. It has opened 25 documentation centres in the region. The offices are open during regular business hours. The processing of applications, however, is done non-stop, in three shifts. Mobile units are used and assigned to offices depending on capacity requirements. Most offices operate with substantial excess capacity.

The documents programme officers have had a number of problems with the United Nations Transitional Administration for Eastern Slavonia, Baranja and Western Sirmium (UNTAES) and local Serb officials in receiving adequate security and resources in the region. Some are excusable under the circumstances. Uncomfortable problems have also arisen owing to aggressive actions by a few UNTAES civilian officers and translators, who choose to act outside of their mandate and contrary to a professional code of conduct.

The number of documents issued is higher than the number of Serb residents in the region since most applicants have applied for and received more than one type of document. Many applicants are non-Serbs. The pre-war population of the Danube region included 67,576 Serbs and 125,937 non-Serbs. Most of the non-Serbs have been ethnically cleansed, and now live in Croatia as displaced persons. In a recent government survey of the displaced persons from the region, only 6 per cent said that they do not want to return.

There has been a lot of speculation about a possible organized Serb exodus, similar to the exodus that took place during the security operation Storm, and during the Implementation Force (IFOR) take-over of Sarajevo. The Government has encouraged the Serbs in the Danube region to stay on numerous occasions, and at various levels. President Franjo Tudjman alone has made six such public overtures to Serbs over the past year, the most recent being on 25 March. The Government has also offered the Serbs minority concessions in its "letter" that other minorities in Croatia severely criticized as excessive. Nevertheless, the Government is aware that some people will leave the region, and in this regard the international community should not discredit its own enormous efforts in the region and the concessions from the Government of Croatia by underestimating the natural consequences of the rebel and occupying policy of ethnic exclusivity pursued through the use of violence.

The Government has been forthcoming to Serbs in other areas as well. It has facilitated the return of 58 per cent of Serbs who fled Croatia and have since made requests to return. As of 12 February, the Office for Displaced Persons and Refugees has registered 14,459 such returns. The remaining requests are being met. Moreover, the situation in the already reintegrated territories has stabilized. The rate of incidents there is not different from the natural rate of incidents in other parts of Croatia. As pointed out in the 5 March report of the Secretary-General, the "majority of reported incidents involve acts of petty crime," (S/1997/195, para. 4). The voluntary return of displaced persons and refugees is of continuing interest to the international community and to the Government of Croatia. With this in mind, a working group, involving the Government, UNTAES and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) was formed recently in order to strengthen the return process in both directions. The Government is the only party in the region that

has brought back refugees who were not affiliated with it during the war into its area of control.

An issue that is often ignored by the international community concerns the status of 145,000 Serbs who, over the past five years, have lived in Croatia in areas not affected by war with lives substantially no different that the lives of their non-Serb neighbours. Five members of that community are presently serving in Sabor, three under the minority quota. Two Serb political parties and various other Serb institutions have functioned normally in Croatia throughout the war. Close to 9,000 ethnic Serbs have served in the Croatian armed forces during the war; they were the largest ethnic contingent in the Croatian Army.

Croatia is a multi-ethnic country. In addition to ethnic Serbs, 450,000 other citizens of Croatia declare themselves to belong to a minority group. About 15 per cent of its citizens are minorities, surpassing in this regard most Western European States. Studies by a Western institution have shown that Croats are among the most tolerant of publics in Europe in their views on minorities.

UNITED
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ORIGINAL: ARABIC

GENERAL ASSEMBLY
Fifty-first session
Agenda item 33
THE SITUATION IN THE MIDDLE EAST

SECURITY COUNCIL
Fifty-second year

Letter dated 8 April 1997 from the Permanent Representative of Lebanon to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

On instructions from my Government and further to our earlier letters concerning Israel's attacks on southern Lebanon and the Western Bekaa and the arbitrary practices against the civilian inhabitants in which it engages on a daily basis, I have the honour to notify you of the series of such incidents that took place during March 1997.

1 March 1997

At 1040 hours Israeli warplanes overflew the Western Bekaa area, focusing on Mashgharah, Ayn al-Tinah, Maydun, Zillaya and Qilya, without carrying out any attacks.

At 0835 hours Israeli warplanes attacked outlying areas of Ayn Bu Siwar and the Mlita and Jabal Safi hills in two successive waves.

3 March 1997

At 2120 hours the environs of the abandoned Lebanese Army barracks in Nabatiyah al-Fawqa came under artillery fire from Israeli positions in the border strip.

5 March 1997

At 1320 hours Israeli warplanes overflew Sidon and the nearby camps at high altitude.

7 March 1997

At 1115 hours Israeli warplanes overflew Sidon at high altitude.

At 1330 hours outlying areas of Jba' and Ayn Bu Siwar and the Jabal Safi highlands came under Israeli artillery fire.

8 March 1997

At 0615 hours the hills to the south of Mashgharah and Ayn al-Tinah, the Jabal Abi Rashid highlands, the Jabbur pool and outlying areas of Qilya, Zillaya and Libbaya in Western Bekaa district came under Israeli artillery fire.

At 1140 hours outlying areas of Dallafah, Qilya, Zillaya and Libbaya came under artillery fire from Israeli positions.

At 1600 hours outlying areas of Jba', Arabsalim and Ayn Bu Siwar and the Mlita and Jabal Safi hills came under Israeli artillery fire. This was accompanied by low-altitude overflights of the area by Israeli warplanes. They also attacked outlying areas of Jba', in two waves, and fired two air-to-surface missiles. Najwa Husayn Khafajah and Husayn Mustafa Khafajah were hurt in the bombardment.

9 March 1997

At 1400 hours outlying areas of Arabsalim, Luwayzah, Jarju', Ayn Bu Siwar and Jba' and the Mlita and Jabal Safi hills came under Israeli artillery fire.

At 1630 hours the hills to the south of Mashgharah and Ayn al-Tinah and the Jabal Ra'id highlands came under Israeli artillery fire.

At 1720 hours Israeli warplanes attacked Jabal Ayn al-Tinah, firing four air-to-surface missiles in an attack that lasted some seven minutes. Israeli warplanes also overflew Sidon at medium altitude.

10 March 1997

At 1000 hours Israeli warplanes overflew Sidon at high altitude.

At 1400 hours the north-western section of Jarju' received bursts of sniper fire from Israeli positions at Tallat Sajd, and the home of Hatim Muhammad al-Shami was hit.

At 1400 hours an explosive charge that had been placed inside a vehicle exploded on the Markaba-Hula road in the Bi'r al-Maslibat locality, Marj Uyun district. The vehicle was destroyed and damage was caused to the home of Husayn Shahrur.

At 1425 hours outlying areas of Majdal Silm, Qabrikha, Tulin, Sawwanah, Frun and Ghanduriyah came under Israeli artillery fire.

11 March 1997

At 2150 hours Israeli warplanes overflew the Harat al-Na'imah and Damur hills and were opposed by ground-based anti-aircraft batteries belonging to the Lebanese Army.

At 2210 hours Israeli warplanes overflew Sidon at high altitude.

12 March 1997

At 0930 hours outlying areas of Arabsalim and Jarju', the Mlita and Jabal Safi hills and areas along Nab' al-Tasah came under Israeli artillery fire. This was accompanied by overflights of the Nabatiyah area by Israeli warplanes.

At 1230 hours outlying areas of Jarju', Jba' and Ayn Bu Siwar, the Mlita and Jabal Safi hills and areas along the Zahrani River in the Iqlim al-Tuffah area came under Israeli artillery fire.

At 1230 hours there were clashes between members of the Lebanese national resistance and Israeli and Lahad forces in the Jabal al-Rayhan area, Jazzin district, in which weapons of all types were used.

14 March 1997

At 1330 hours outlying areas of Tulin, Qabrikha, Sawwanah, Majdal Silm, Shaqra, Bra'shit, Tibnin, Ayta al-Jabal, Haris, Kafra and Yatar came under Israeli artillery fire.

At 1530 hours there were clashes between members of the Lebanese national resistance and Israeli and Lahad forces in the Jabal al-Rayhan area, Jazzin district, in which weapons of all types were used. They stopped at 1700 hours.

At 1645 hours outlying areas of Jba', Ayn Bu Siwar and Jarju' and areas along the Zahrani River came under artillery fire from Israeli positions inside the border strip.

16 March 1997

At 2200 hours Israeli warplanes overflew Sidon at low altitude.

17 March 1997

At 0600 hours outlying areas of Majdal Zun came under Israeli artillery fire.

19 March 1997

At 2130 hours Israeli warplanes overflew Sidon at low altitude. They also overflew the Nabatiyah and Iqlim al-Tuffah areas at low altitude, carrying out mock attacks and dropping heat balloons.

20 March 1997

At 0900 hours Israeli forces entered the town of Arnun in Nabatiyah district. They arrested a number of residents and took them to an unknown destination. They subsequently released four of them after interrogation, and three others remain in detention.

At 0915 hours four Israeli warplanes attacked the Nahr al-Asi locality near Ayn al-Zarqa' in Baalbek district. They also attacked the Nahr al-Asi - Hirmil area, causing material damage but leaving no casualties.

At 1820 hours outlying areas of Qilya, Libbaya and Zillaya in Western Bekaa district came under Israeli artillery fire.

22 March 1997

At 1400 hours there was an explosion in the home of Kamil Nimr Abu Samra in Ayshiyah and he was killed.

25 March 1997

At 1930 hours Israeli warplanes overflew the Iqlim al-Tuffah area at low altitude and carried out a number of mock attacks over Jba' and Arabsalim and the Mlita and Jabal Safi hills.

At 2210 hours Israeli warplanes overflew Sidon and the nearby camps.

At 2220 hours Israeli warplanes overflew the Sa'diyat coast, Damur and Na'imah.

26 March 1997

At 1033 hours Israeli warplanes overflew Baalbek. They also overflew the Nabatiyah area at low altitude and, at 1330 hours, they overflew Tyre.

27 March 1997

At 0530 hours the environs of Nabatiyah al-Fawqa near the abandoned Lebanese Army barracks came under Israeli artillery fire.

At 1000 hours Israeli warplanes overflew the Iqlim al-Tuffah area.

30 March 1997

At 1100 hours Israeli warplanes overflew Nabatiyah at high altitude. At 1400 hours they overflew the Iqlim al-Tuffah area at low altitude, carrying out mock attacks. This was accompanied by an Israeli artillery bombardment of outlying areas of Jarju' and Arabsalim and the Mlita and Jabal Safi hills.

31 March 1997

At 1110 hours Israeli warplanes overflew the Tyre area at medium altitude.

At 1120 hours Israeli warplanes overflew Nabatiyah at medium altitude and then overflew Sidon and the nearby camps at high altitude.

The Lebanese Government strongly condemns the continued Israeli occupation and these fresh attacks and arbitrary practices inflicted on the Lebanese population, which have left a number of casualties and have caused further serious damage to property.

Like previous attacks, this new series is in flagrant violation of the sovereignty and independence of Lebanon and constitutes a breach of the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, of international law and of basic human rights.

I should be grateful if you would have this letter circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 33, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Samir MOUBARAK
Ambassador
Permanent Representative